

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for controlling interactive television offerings over a
5 transaction-enabled broadcast network, the apparatus comprising:

at least one processor operative to: (i) receive broadcast content from a broadcast
content source; (ii) process the broadcast content; (iii) transmit said processed broadcast
content over said network to a viewer; (iv) receive request data over said network from
said viewer, said data being transmitted by said viewer in response to said processed
10 broadcast content; and (v) process said request data; wherein said processor is further
operative as a central point of control for said request data or interactive content contained
within said broadcast content; and

memory, operatively coupled to the processor, for storing at least a portion of data
related to at least one of the receiving, transmitting and processing steps.

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2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said broadcast content from a broadcast
source comprises advertising content.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said broadcast content from a broadcast
source comprises program content.

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4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor is further operative to add
interactive content to the broadcast content.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said added interactive content is advertising content.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said advertising content is added at the end of a group of commercials.

5 7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor is further operative to collect and store previously broadcast content.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said previously broadcast content comprises advertisement content.

10 9. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said previously broadcast content comprises interactive content.

10. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said previously broadcast content is accessible by said viewer in conducting e-commerce.

11. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said added interactive content specifies local purchasing information.

15 12. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said broadcast content from a broadcast content source comprises interactive content.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said processor is further operative to modify said interactive content.

14. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said modification of interactive content is performed by an advertiser.

15. The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said modification of interactive content is performed by a network operator.

5 16. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said processor is further operative to selectively enable or disable said interactive content.

17. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said request data comprises a universal resource locator (URL) and wherein said processor is further operative to redirect said URL.

10 18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said redirecting a URL further comprises reducing network congestion.

19. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said redirecting a URL further comprises forwarding said URL to a local server for fulfillment.

15 20. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said memory is operative to store data based on commerce conducted by the viewer over said network.

21. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said processor is further operative to formulate a table of viewer purchasing history data based on said stored data.

22. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said data based on commerce conducted by the viewer over said network is collected from a broadcast receiving device of said viewer.

23. The apparatus of 22 wherein said broadcast receiving device comprises a
5 set-top box.

24. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said processor is further operative to collect said data based on commerce conducted by the viewer during a period of low network load.

25. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said stored data is accessible to said
10 viewer over said network.

26. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said stored data is accessible to a network operator.

27. The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said stored data is accessible to an advertiser.

15 28. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor is further operative to associate a personal identification number with the viewer.

29. The apparatus of claim 28 wherein a unique personal identification number is associated with an individual viewer.

30. The apparatus of claim 28 wherein a unique personal identification number is associated with a particular broadcast receiving device.

31. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor is further operative to securely store credit card information of said viewer.

5 32. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said processor is further operative to store at least one ship-to address of said viewer.

33. A system for conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said system comprising:

10 a broadcast receiving device operatively coupled to said network and configurable to enable a viewer to interact with an interactive broadcast; and

a local network operator operatively coupled to said network, said local network operator comprising a controller, said controller being operatively configurable to tabulate commerce transactions occurring over said network.

15 34. A system for conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said system comprising:

a broadcast receiving device operatively coupled to said network and configurable to enable a viewer to interact with a broadcast comprising interactive content; and

20 a local network operator operatively coupled to said network, said local network operator comprising a controller, said controller operatively configurable to selectively modify, enable or disable said interactive content.

35. A system for conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said system comprising:

a broadcast receiving device operatively coupled to said network and configurable to enable a viewer to interact with an interactive broadcast; and

a local network operator operatively coupled to said network, said local network operator comprising a controller, said controller operatively configurable to add interactive content to non-interactive broadcast content.

36. The system of claim 35 wherein said controller is further operative to route request data from said viewer in response to said interactive broadcast to a server for fulfillment.

37. The system of claim 36 wherein said server is a local server.

38. The system of claim 35 wherein said broadcast content comprises multiple interactive content streams and wherein said broadcast receiving device is operative to filter said multiple interactive content streams.

39. The system of claim 38 wherein said filtering of multiple interactive content streams is based at least in part on the relevance of said interactive content streams to said viewer.

40. A system for conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said system comprising:

a broadcast receiving device operatively coupled to said network and configurable to enable a viewer to interact with an interactive broadcast; and

a local network operator operatively coupled to said network, said local network operator comprising a controller, said controller operatively configurable to tabulate data based on commerce activities conducted by a viewer on said network.

41. A method of conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast
5 network, said method comprising:

creating an advertisement comprising non-interactive content, said advertisement being broadcast over said network; and

creating interactive content, said additional content being selectively integrated with said non-interactive content according to a predetermined schedule.

10 42. The method of claim 41 wherein said integrated content is selectively integrated using a controller.

43. The method of claim 41 wherein said predetermined schedule is allocated into time slots.

15 44. The method of claim 43 wherein said time slots are purchased by an advertiser from a network operator.

45. The method of claim 41 wherein said integrated content is broadcast to a predetermined local market.

46. A method of conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said method comprising:

20 creating broadcast content comprising conventional content and interactive advertising content for broadcast over said network; and

selectively broadcasting said interactive content by way of a controller according to a pre-specified agreement.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein said agreement is made between an advertiser and network operator.

48. A method of conducting e-commerce over a transaction-enabled broadcast network, said method comprising:

creating broadcast content comprising conventional and interactive advertising content;

10 broadcasting said broadcast content;

receiving request data over said network from a viewer, said request data being transmitted by said viewer in response to said broadcast content; and

routing said request data to a local server for fulfillment.

49. An article of manufacture for coordinating interactive television offerings over a transaction enabled broadcast network, the article comprising a machine readable medium containing one or more programs which when executed implement the steps of:

receiving broadcast content from a broadcast content source;

processing the broadcast content;

transmitting said processed broadcast content over said network to a viewer;

20 receiving request data over said network from said viewer, said data being transmitted by said viewer in response to said processed broadcast content; and processing said request data.